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ABSTRACT

This study examines one analysis of Somali clause structure and syntactic typology, characterized as a radical departure, and finds in it considerable grammatical insight but also some problems. Another analysis is presented that retains both the advantages of the conventional view of the Somali sentence and the structural insights of the new analysis. Three alternative ways of viewing the Somali sentence are outlined: the conventional whole-clause approach; the "clause-plus-satellite" model that precipitated this discussion, and a third, "nucleate" analysis that recognizes both of the previous structures as applicable to the data. In development of this model, examples are drawn from a number of diverse languages, and the discussion treats these issues: realization of verbal agreement; behavior of focused constituents; case marking; and noun classes. Contains 31 references. (MSE)

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Syntactic Typology and the Problem with Choosing One Analysis

Alan R. King

INTRODUCTION

In ordinary human life, something can be two different things at the same time. An underground train station can also be a wartime bomb shelter; an answer can be a question. Literature, among other human activities, thrives on simultaneous multiple interpretations, and perhaps similar acts are essential to the human cognitive process generally. Some current linguistic theories insist that the human language processing faculty, which theoretical models are trying to approximate in some sense, follows rules other than those of ordinary cognition. Yet even this premise need not imply an exclusively linear model of language processing.

A recent article on Somali's clause structure and syntactic typology by Saeed (1994) challenges the ordinary assumption that, in a Somali sentence translating "Ali gave the newspaper to the girl" (see (19) below), the phrases translating "Ali" "the newspaper" and "the girl" are arguments of the verb "gave"; instead, they are "satellites" standing outside the clause. The premise has theoretical repercussions for a description of Somali grammar.

In the following article I suggest that, granted that Saeed is right about "Ali" being a satellite "adjoined" to the above sentence, it still *is* the subject of the sentence in a way; both points of view may be simultaneously meaningful. If our ordinary cognition can handle this notion, then perhaps a linguistic model should too.

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THREE MODELS OF CLAUSE STRUCTURE

Saeed (1994), having observed that Somali (Omo-Tana, Cushitic) superficially displays Hale's (1983) three characteristic features for nonconfigurational languages (free word order, discontinuity, heavy use of null anaphora), then shows that an alternative analysis can cast a different light on the language's structure, concluding that "the superficial identification of these Omo-Tana languages as nonconfigurational on the basis of Hale's criteria... breaks down under close examination into a much more complicated story".

This involves a radical reanalysis of Somali clause syntax wherein the predication is redefined almost to coincide with what in a traditional account might be called the verbal group (or verbal piece). In Principles and Parameters terms, according to Saeed's analysis only one lexical NP can appear under CP, namely a $NP_{[FOC]}$ in Spec position, all other overt NPs having been relegated to the status of "freely adjoined" TOPICs (or "satellites"). Various preverbal clitics which double satellite NPs constitute technically the predication's arguments, whereupon a "typologically familiar" strictly SOV clause structure emerges. The satellite NPs, "freely" ordered and case-marked, "cannot be assigned case configurationality, and we will assume that they inherit case from the clitic pronoun in argument position".

This bold redrawing of Somali clause syntax actually contains considerable grammatical insight, yet is intuitively difficult to accept that, on such a general scale, NPs constituting the semantic arguments of clauses are structurally not arguments. Saeed's identification of all such constituents as "topics" devalues to the point of meaninglessness the pragmatically sound concept of topicality. The analysis also threatens to empty of any substantive meaning some familiar grammatical terms such as "NP", applied in Saeed's analysis to the preverbal clitics.

From a functional or practical viewpoint, ideally we would like to retain both the advantages of the conventional *whole-clause view* of the Somali sentence and also the structural insights inherent in Saeed's *clause-plus-satellite* model (as I shall henceforth call it for short). Unfortunately, the Chomskyan framework, far from allowing the last-

mentioned problem to be expressed in formal terms, forces us to choose one analysis, either Saeed's or the traditional one. Yet in intuitive terms at least, the evidence in favour of a *clause-plus-satellite* analysis for Somali does not necessarily invalidate the conventional whole-clause concept. Again intuitively (in the absence of a formal framework that is ready to accommodate such a notion), each Somali clause possibly has two structures, one of which refers to Saeed's inner or nuclear clause, while the other structure is that of the extended or whole clause. These could each have independent structural characteristics, while case marking on peripheral NPs and person marking in the necleus would assist their referential mapping onto each other. I will call what I have just described a *nucleate* model.

We thus have three alternative ways of viewing the Somali sentence:

(a) In the traditional *whole-clause* analysis, the clause consists of a verbal group and its (lexical) NP arguments.

(b) In Saeed's *clause-plus-satellite* analysis, the clause *is* the verbal group--either alone, or with one (focused) lexical NP. All other lexical NPs present are satellites.

(c) In the *nucleate* analysis proposed here, both these structures are recognised as applicable to the data. Each is clause-like in certain respects:

THE NUCLEAR CLAUSE:

* contains all syntactically obligatory clause components;
* can constitute the whole clause, because peripheral elements are optional;
* normally must be present;
* is constituted independently of the whole clause, i.e. is not affected by the actual presence or absence of peripheral NPs (because of doubling);
* has certain "familiar" syntactic attributes, e.g. may admit a "configurational" analysis.

THE WHOLE CLAUSE:

* has propositional/semantic attributes, such as full lexical content;
* has discourse/pragmatic attributes, including information structure (topic and focus functions);
* freely incorporates lexical arguments;
* has case-marked NPs.

BOTH NUCLEAR AND WHOLE CLAUSES:

* contain a predicate;
* specify arguments; and
* incorporate TAM markers (INFL).

In a non-formal way, then, the present paper supports Saeed's assessment that "a two-value parameter of configurationality is too simple to reflect the facts". Below I shall argue that a system like that of Somali can be viewed as part of a well-attested typological continuum. A nucleate or bistructural clause analysis may also be needed to describe some languages to which the arguments invoked by Saeed to justify describing Somali in terms of the *clause-plus-satellite* model alone may not apply.

After looking more closely at this idea, I will concentrate on two arguments developed by Saeed in support of a *clause-plus-satellite* view of Somali, concerning (a) the nature of the preverbal person morphemes (clitic pronouns or agreement markers?) and (b) the syntax of Somali's main focus construction. Regarding (a), I shall maintain that for some languages the "correct" characterisation of such elements itself hinges on the choice of clause analysis and therefore cannot be a decisive criterion for determining the latter in such languages. As for (b), I shall point out that the aspects of behaviour of the Somali focus construction alluded to by Saeed are well explained by reference to the construction's relationship to relative clause structures via the grammaticalisation of cleft-like constructions. Given that very similar developments can be observed in typologically unrelated languages, e.g. Welsh (Celtic, Indo-European) and Hawaiian (Polynesian, Austronesian), the presence of these phenomena in Somali is probably not symptomatically related to

the general features of Somali's clause syntax under consideration. But first, how do nucleate clauses work?

On Nucleate Clauses

From an Indo-European linguistics perspective, we are accustomed to thinking of case relations as directly affecting NPs and being signalled through these, whether via word order as in English or formal tagging as in Latin. Yet such relations hold between two parts, an NP and a verb, and may just as well be indexed on the latter. Thus in Basque, a European isolate language, the indexing in a finite verb differentiates between direct and indirect objects:

(1) a. *Bidali nuen.*
sent AUX
"I sent her/him."
b. *Bidali nion.*
sent AUX
"I sent it to her/him."

while also specifying the number and person of each:

(2) a. *Bidali nituen.*
"I sent them."
b. *Bidali nien.*
"I sent it to them."
c. *Bidali nizkion*
"I sent them to her/him."

etc. Now (1a-b) and (2a-c) are all complete, well-formed sentences. The arguments are not represented by NPs, but indexed by markers within the verbal group. When such a sentence is optionally expanded by allowing one or more NPs to appear overtly, the necleus remains unchanged and the NPs, appropriately case-marked and agreeing in person and number with the indices, are positioned "freely", giving rise to examples like (3b-f):[1]

(3) a. *Bidali zion.*
sent AUX
"She/He sent it to her/him."

b. *Mikelek neskari liburua bidali zion.*
Mikel-ERG girl-DAT book-ABS sent AUX
"Mikel sent the girl the book."
c. *Neskari liburua bidali zion Mikelek.*
d. *Liburua Mikelek neskari bidali zion.*
e. *Liburua bidali zion neskari Mikelek.*
f. *Bidali zion Mikelek neskari liburua.* "ditto"

The optionality of occurrence and freedom of placement of Basque NPs contrasts sharply with the obligatory nature and fixed positions of components of the verbal group. Non-third-person arguments are marked as in (4):

(4)

	Prefix	suffix
1s	*n-*	*-t, -da*
2s	*h-*	*-k, -n, -a, -na*
1p	*g-*	*-gu*
2p	*z-*	*-zu*

The rules determining when the prefixed markers and when the suffixed markers must be used are rather complicated (King 1993;158f.), but a major factor is the grammatical role of the argument to which a marker corresponds.[2]

Thus, it is not necessary for first or second person personal pronouns in subject or object function to appear explicitly unless their presence is required for topicalization, focusing, or some other emphatic or stylistic purpose. For example, (5a) and (6a) without *ni* "I, me" are less marked and more usual than (5b) and (6b) with it:

(5) a. *Bihar joango n-aiz.*
tomorrow go-FUT I-am
"I'll go tomorrow."
b. *Ni bihar joango n-aiz.*
I-(ABS) tomorrow go-FUT I-am
"I'll go tomorrow."

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(6) a. *Irakasleak ezagutzen n-au.*
teacher-ERG know-IPF me-has
"The teacher knows me."
b. *Irakasleak ni ezagutzen n-au.*
teacher-ERG me- (ABS) know-IPF me-has
"ditto"

The various positions for NP arguments are not pragmatically interchangeable. Some orders are unmarked, notably SOV (De Rijk 1969). Subordinate clauses also tend to gravitate towards SOV order (Salaburu 1987). Another curtailment of word-order freedom arises from the impossibility of beginning a clause with an unprefixed, synthetically conjugated finite verb. Periphrastic *joango naiz* "I will go" may stand clause-initially as in (7), but synthetic *noa* "I am going" in (8) may not:

(7) a. *Bihar joango naiz.*
tomorrow go-FUT I-am
"I'll go tomorrow."
b. *Joango naiz bihar.*
"ditto"

(8) a. *Bihar noa*
tomorrow I-go
"I'm going tomorrow."
b. **Noa bihar.*

Moreover, a clause constituent may only immediately precede a plain synthetic verb form, as in (7a), if focused. If no constituent is focused, a synthetic verb form in an affirmative clause is preceded by a prefix *ba-* (King 1994:344).[3] Both (9a) and (9b) are then possible word orders:

(9) a. *Bihar banoa.*
"Tomorrow, I'm leaving."
b. *Banoa bihar.*
"I'm leaving tomorrow (I really am)."

The emphatic topic position is clause-initial, while focused constituents immediately precede the verb (Altube 1929). One feature of Basque grammar making word-order "scrambling" of arguments possible without loss of information is the explicit marking of NPs for case by means of suffixes; while a second way in which Basque syntax welds the constituents of a clause together is through the obligatory person and number indices in the conjugated element of each finite verb that have already been mentioned. Compare (10a-c):

(10) a. *Ikasle batzuk irakasle hori ezagutzen du -te.*
pupil some-ERG teacher that-(ABS) know AUX-NUM
"Some pupils know that teacher."

b. *Irakasle horrek itasle batzu ezagutzen d-it-u.*
teacher that-ERG pupil some-(ABS) know AUX-NUM
"That teacher knows some pupils."

c. *Ikasle batzuk irakasle guztiak ezagutzen d-it-uz-te.*
pupil some-ERG teacher all-PLU-(ABS) know AUX-NUM-NUM
"Some pupils know all the teachers."

Thus in (10a), for instance, it would be clear from the auxiliary form that the plural "pupils" must be the subject and the singular "teacher" the object, rather than vice-versa, even if Basque did not also encode that information through case marking.[4]

These considerations may lead us, like Saeed (1994) for Somali, to ask whether

(a) a Basque sentence, in line with the traditional view, consists of a verb and a number of "freely" -ordered NP arguments, with potentially redundant marking of case on the NPs and agreement on the verb (the whole-clause view);

or if

(b) the real arguments of a Basque clause are constituted by the markers within the verbal group themselves, with the lexical NP arguments constituting optional satellites "freely adjoined" to a reduced clause (the clause-and-satellite view).[5]

Position (b) would involve treating the person markers in the verbal group as pronouns synchronically (that they might "be" so diachronically is not at issue here), rather than as agreement markers. In fact, no analysis in such terms has been contemplated by Basque grammarians and it is doubtful whether it is likely to be in the future, because its adoption would create more problems than it solved. If the verbal person markers are NPs, these are so radically different in form and behaviour from lexical NPs as to make the claim that they belong to the same category hardly tenable. Other problems might be the place of the non-conjugated part of periphrastic verb forms in the analysis, and the treatment of focused constituents. Yet despite these difficulties, as *one perspective among others*, such a view is not without interest.

Basque and Somali clause structure (Saeed 1987, 1994) share a number of general features relevant to the present discussion. Somali word order is "free", but with special treatment of focused constituents. NPs are casemarked, while the verbal group contains clitic elements indicating the person and number of most arguments.[6] The latter are obligatory and their position is fixed, whereas NP arguments are optional and their position is free.

Differences between Basque and Somali include the following two points.

Realisation of verbal agreement.
Somali verbal groups, apart from morphological agreement with their subject through suffixed or prefixed verbal inflections (Saeed 1987:58f.), have a system of obligatory clitic elements, such as *-uu* "3s. subject", *-ay* "3p. subject", *ku* "2s. object", *noo* "for us", etc., which precede the synthetic verb form. As in Basque, third person objects are realised by zero, for example:

(11) a. *W- uu ku arkay.*
CM-he you saw
"He saw you."
b. *W- uu Ø arkay.*
CM-he saw
"He saw him/her/it."

Saeed (1993, 1994) calls these elements pronominal clitics rather than agreement affixes, although he recognises that they might represent "an intermediate stage in the development of a secondary (more comprehensive) system of agreement".

Behaviour of focused constituents.
Focused NPs in Somali, occurring to the left of the verb and followed by a special marker (*ay/aa]* in (12)), are *not* doubled by a person-marking object clitic (Saeed 1994:60, 64):

(12) *Adiga ay- ay (*ku) garteen.*
you FOC-they recognised.
"They recognised you."

Saeed accounts for the special behaviour of focused NPs by holding that they, unlike other NPs, belong to the nuclear clause (see above).

In Basque, on the contrary, the agreement morphemes are neither clitics nor pronouns but mere affixes, which appear for both focused and non-focused NPs. Given that some of the arguments for a full-fledged *clause-and-satellite* analysis of Somali thus cannot be extended to Basque, one conclusion might be that despite considerable apparent overall similarity in their clause structures, Basque and Somali will receive radically different syntactic analyses, perhaps even implying that Somali syntax is configurational while Basque syntax is not. This is intuitively unsatisfying.

Yimas, a Papuan language of the Lower Sepik family (Foley & Van Valin 1984, Foley 1986), seems to represent a language type that applies the *clause-and-satellite* principle, proposed by Saeed for Somali, more thoroughly than Somali itself. The order of NPs is "free", although

verb-final clauses are common. Verbal groups are fully indexed by means of prefixes for all except some oblique arguments. In Foley's (1986) words, "In Yimas, the core nominals are simply in apposition to the verb [i.e. the verbal group], which alone is obligatory to the clause... It is not surprising, then, that in the great majority of Yimas clauses the verb occurs without any associated nominals at all." "If the clause is to contain associated nominals, they can be added, in any order, according to constraints that may be imposed by the verb. Peripheral [i.e. oblique] nominals, like locatives or temporals, may be freely added... Core nominals, like actor and undergoer, are more restricted. They may be added subject to the proviso that their specifications for person, number and class agree with one of the verbal prefixes for core arguments."

Despite these coincidences in clause organisation, Yimas differs interestingly from both Somali and Basque in certain significant respects.

Case marking.
Yimas subject, object (direct or indirect) and benefactive NPs, called "core nominals" by Foley, which are indexed in the verbal group, are not case-marked; only unindexed oblique ("peripheral") NPs take a case suffix.

Noun classes.
Yimas nouns are divided into a number of agreement classes somewhat reminiscent of Bantu languages. There are around a dozen noun-classes, and the indices contained in verbal groups must agree with subjects and objects in class as well as number and person. There are male, female, nonhuman-animate, and plant classes; other nouns are classified according to phonological criteria, so for example nouns ending in *-mp*, such as *impramp* "basket", belong to the *-mp* class (Foley's class VII).

Theoretically the fact that Yimas satellite NPs are not case-marked is compatible with the clause-peripheral syntactic role Foley claims for them. Presumably the non-marking of NPs for case and the more efficient indexing of arguments in the verbal group, due to the rich system of noun classes, are functionally related phenomena. In

principle this "pure-indexing" arrangement is systematically less redundant than that of Somali and Basque with their janus-like double signalling (verbal indexing *and* NP case-tagging).

AGREEMENT MARKERS OR PRONOUNS?

Saeed (1994) states that the preverbal person morphemes in Somali are pronominal clitics, not agreement affixes. The point contributes to his position that these constitute the Somali verb's real arguments. He is interested in establishing, for the sake of the formal clause-plus-satellite analysis, that they are nominal elements, i.e. pronouns, and hence also that they are not mere affixes but clitics. On the other hand, not all clitics are pronouns, so for any other position it is unimportant what morphophonological form the person morphemes take. In Basque and Yimas they are clearly affixes, whereas Kiribati subject markers and Macedonian object markers are *agreement clitics*. What matters most is their syntactic function. Agreement markers co-occur with, and index, coreferential NPs, whereas when clitic and non-clitic forms of a pronoun coexist paradigmatically, such pairs are often syntactically in complementary distribution.[7]

This criterion is expressed from a whole-clause perspective, without using the "satellite" concept. Granted that the Somali elements are indeed formally clitics, the way we state their syntactic function apparently depends on whether a *whole-clause* or a *clause-and-satellite* view of the grammatical system is taken, rather than vice-versa.

In Kiribati, an Oceanic (Austronesian) language spoken in Micronesia, which does not display nonconfigurational features, grammatical case relations are not marked morphologically on NPs, but are signalled by VOS word order, e.g. (Bingham 1945; in my gloss, SM = subject marker, OM = object marker):

(13) *E karao-a te bata te aomata.*
SM make -OM ART house ART man
"The man builds the house."

Number is usually signalled in NPs; for example, the singular article *te* contrasts with the plural article, realised as zero:

(14) a. *E na nako te aomata.*
SM ASP go ART man
"The man will go."
b. *A na nako Ø aomata..*
SM ASP go (PLUR_ART) man
"The men will go."

The number and person of the subject is reflected by the choice of a clause-initial clitic, which I will call a *subject marker* (SM). Kiribati subject markers are obligatory and have a fixed position preceding the verb or the preverbal aspect marker if one is present (in what is nonetheless a strictly VOS language). It is not necessary for the NP with which the subject marker agrees to be present; thus besides (14a), (15a) is possible, but not (15b):

(15) a. *E na nako.*
"She/He will go."
b. **Na nako te aomata..*

Personal pronoun NPs behave like other NPs. Therefore both (16a)-the unmarked sentence--and (16b) are grammatical, but (16c) is not (Anonymous 1951:31):

(16) a. *N na nako*
SM ASP go
"I will go."

b. *N na nako ngai.*
SM ASP go I
"I (myself) will go."
c. **Na nako ngai.*
ASP go I

Kiribati transitive verbs are also followed by suffixed *object markers* (OM): see example (13) above. Like subject markers, these are obligatory, have a fixed position relative to the verb, and agree with their referent, the verb's object, in number and person, regardless of whether the latter is explicitly present.

Mid-century grammars of Kiribati refer to the items I call subject markers as *nominative pronouns* (Bingham 1945:25) or *subjective pronouns* (Anonymous 1951:31); according to the same authorities, the object markers are *objective pronouns*. The same grammars call *ngai* an *emphatic pronoun*.

Serb-Croat and Macedonian, neighbouring Slavonic languages on the Balkan Peninsula, present a good example of related languages sharing very similar clitic morphemes which function syntactically in quite different ways. In Croatian (Norris 1993) they are straightforward pronouns, and there is no clitic doubling of either pronouns or noun NPs:

(17) a. *Vidim ga.*
I-see him
"I see him."
b. *Vidim Rudolfa.*
I-see Rudolf
"I see Rudolf."
c. *Njega vidim.*
him I-see
"I see him."

Ga and *njega* are the clitic and non-clitic forms of the pronoun "him"; (17a) is the usual, unmarked form of "I see him", while (17c) is marked.

In Macedonian (Lyons 1990), however, where the cognate forms are *go* and *nego* respectively, there is obligatory clitic doubling of definite object NPs and all indirect ones (word order also differs from Serbo-Croat):

(18) a. *Marija go poznava.*
"Marija knows him."
b. *Go vidov Grozdana.*
"I saw Grozdan."
c. *Marija go poznava nego.*
"Marija knows him."

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Independently of morphophonological form, there is therefore reason to consider that, in turning its clitic object pronouns into clitic agreement markers, Macedonian may have reorganised its overall clause structure.[8]

FOCUSED NOUN PHRASES

In Somali, focused NPs (a) are followed by a focus marker (FOC) *baa* or *ayaa*, (b) are always in the absolutive case form, (c) are not doubled by the usual pronominal clitic, (d) command only "restricted" morphological agreement in the verb, and (e) reject the usual declarative clause marker (CM, or classifier in Saeed's terminology), *w[aa]* (Saeed 1987, 1994):

(19) a. *Cali wargeyskii w- uu siiyey inantii.*
Ali the-newspaper CM-he gave the-girl
"Ali gave the newspaper to the girl."
b. *Cali baa wargeyskii siiyey inatii.*
Ali FOC the-newspaper gave the-girl
"Ali gave the newspaper to the girl."

See also (12) above. Although focused non-subjects take no doubling clitic, given that third person is represented by zero in the object clitic paradigm this could also be analysed as third-person agreement if wished (see below).

These Somali focus phenomena, although idiosyncratic at first sight, actually constitute a recognisable pattern common to numerous other languages not necessarily sharing Somali's specific features of clause organisation at all. This suggests that rather than being the product of the *clause-and-satellite* structure of Somali clauses, as suggested by Saeed, the conjunction of these features within Somali may, typologically, be fairly coincidental.

In Welsh, a superficially VSO language with no nonconfigurational features, some personal pronouns vary in form according to grammatical role. Focused subject pronouns take an "independent" form (e.g. *fi* "I, me") rather than the normal subject form (*i* "I"). Compare:

(20) a. *Fe brynais i fara.*
CM bought-1s I bread
"I bought bread."
b. *Fi brynodd fara.*
I (FOC) bought-3s bread
"I bought bread."

Focused NPs, unlike non-focused arguments, must occur to the left of the verb. There is normally subject agreement in Welsh (e.g. *brynais* "I-bought"), but verbs with a focused subject do not agree in person or number, simply taking the third-person-singular form (*brynodd* "she/he-bought") (Jones & Thomas 1977:292). The preverbal clause marker *fe*, signalling declarative-affirmative clause type, is absent from focus sentences.

Parallels with the Somali focus construction are obvious, and they can all be accounted for once the focus construction is analysed as a reduced and grammaticalised type of cleft construction with ellipsis.[9] If (20b) is an elliptical version of (21) (in English paraphrase):

(21) *(It was) I/me (who) bought bread.*

it is seen at once why "I/me" is in predicative or independent rather than subject form and why the verb "bought" could be in a third-person-singular ("reduced agreement") form. Given that relative clauses in Welsh do not take the affirmative clause marker *fe*, its absence from the focus construction is equally accounted for in this way. (Likewise, Somali relative clauses do not have *waa*.)

Another VSO language which uses a grammaticalised pseudo-cleft construction to express focus is Hawaiian (King n.d.). Focused NPs, placed on the left of the verb, may lack the usual prepositional case marker, while the verbal group is marked not as in other declarative clauses but as in subordinate clauses (Elbert & Pukui 1979).

Saeed (1984) recognises the evident relationship between the focus construction and the relative clause in Somali. Examples of similar constructions elsewhere with parallel consequences, despite

considerable overall typological differences from Somali, may imply that these phenomena should not be treated as strongly symptomatic of a *clause-plus-satellite* system, as suggested by Saeed (1994).

CONCLUSION

The *clause-plus-satellite* view developed by Saeed (1994) contains a useful syntactic insight, yet as formulated requires a counter-intuitive abandonment of the time-honoured *whole-clause* perspective. Furthermore, his analysis is more difficult to sustain formally in languages like Basque or Yimas which, while displaying considerable affinity in their apparent principles of clause organisation, have non-lexical affixes in place of Somali's clitic-type nuclear person morphemes. Yet the Kiribati and Macedonian examples illustrate the importance of giving priority to syntactic function over morphological appearance in evaluating so-called clitic pronouns. Finally, I have questioned the relevance attached to the syntax of focus in Saeed's exposition, given that comparable patterns are found even in languages such as Welsh and Hawaiian with no typological affinity to Somali.

Most theoretical approaches to syntactic analysis demand, in principle, straightforward answers to straightforward questions; yet language is perhaps not always structured in a straightforward way. Here I have not produced a conclusive demonstration that any particular language has double or nucleate clause structure; the question merely remains open. What I hope to have shown, however, is that the flexibility of viewpoint inherent to such an approach as the nucleate view, for all its eclecticism, may lead to more meaningful and insightful language typologies and descriptions.

NOTES

1. For a structurally similar sentence Euskaltzaindia (1991:357) lists twenty-four possible word orders, i.e. all possible permutations of the four elements. Basque, like Somali, is sometimes said to be non-configurational. The debate has so far not been conclusive: see *inter alia* de Rijk 1978, Levin 1989, Rebuschi 1989, or for a general review (in Basque), Eguzkitza & Ortiz de Urbina 1987.

2. Third-person arguments may be either sometimes or always zero-marked in the verb form, depending on the morphological analysis chosen by each grammarian (Lafon 1955 and 1961, Trask 1977 and 1981, Saltarelli 1988, Euskaltzaindia 1987).

3. "Affirmative" *ba-* thus seems to be comparable to Somali *waa* and Welsh *fe*, for which see below.

4. It is conceivable that the spreading "vulgarism" consisting of omitting ergative case markers, creating potential ambiguity between subjects and direct objects, may be "licensed" by this circumstance. The same could apply to established absolutive-ergative syncretisms such as standard *hauek* "these (absolutive/ergative)" or traditional western *-ak* "absolutive/ergative plural".

5. One significant difference between the Somali and Basque systems not mentioned so far is that whereas in Somali oblique ("adpositional") arguments are also indexed in the verbal group, in Basque such arguments are not indexed and must be represented in the whole clause by NPs with special case markers or postpositions.

6. This is really an oversimplification. Details regarding the occurrence and placement of subject clitics (Saeed 1987) leave some doubt as to whether these fall into the same class as non-subject clitics.

7. Again I am simplifying; the above statement takes no account of various intermediate systems such as those of Spanish, Rumanian or Greek clitic pronouns. In Modern Greek, for example, according to Warburton (1976), optional clitic doubling for object NPs has a "pragmatic" function.

8. In this context it is most interesting to observe that Macedonian has lost the common Slavic system of case suffixes for nouns. A direct object in Serbo-Croat takes an accusative case form; in Macedonian it takes none, but (if it is definite) an agreement clitic, e.g. *go* above, will index it for number, gender and person. Bulgarian seems to

represent an intermediate stage between the Serbo-Croat and Macedonian types in this respect (Lyons 1990:54, note 13). In Bulgarian, which has also lost its case markers, doubling only occurs with fronted objects and even then is only optional.

9. Perhaps *ex-cleft* would be a better term, to emphasise that the construction in question has evolved from a transparent cleft structure rather than being one synchronically. In both Somali and Welsh there exists the alternative of using an unevolved or less grammaticalised explicit cleft construction (formed with *waxa* in Somali, Saeed 1987:213) for stronger focusing. Simplifing, the latter could be considered the pragmatic equivalent of English cleft focus constructions, whereas "ex-cleft"-construction sentences correspond to English sentences where focus is signalled by intonation alone.

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